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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 44

By Cooper B

A RESOLUTION to create a special joint committee to study the feasibility of creating a unitary state system of higher education in Tennessee by merging the University of Tennessee system into the State Board of Regents system.

WHEREAS, presently the administration of the system of higher education in Tennessee is divided between the University of Tennessee system, which is governed by the University of Tennessee Board of Trustees, and the State University and College system, which is governed by the Tennessee Board of Regents; and

WHEREAS, the two systems, while enjoying their own histories and traditions, impose a heavy financial burden upon the state of Tennessee and its citizens, while the state is experiencing serious revenue and budget problems, necessitating difficult choices among funding priorities; and

WHEREAS, it is possible that a merger of the two independent systems under a single governing board could produce significant savings through increased efficiency, reduction of administrative expense, and simplification of allotment of degree programs among the several campuses; and

WHEREAS, a careful examination of the various methods by which such a merger could be instituted would be one option for the General Assembly to take to solve the state's fiscal problems; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED SECOND GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, That there is hereby created a special joint committee to study methods by which the administration of the University of Tennessee System, which is governed by its Board of Trustees, and the State University and College System, which is governed by the State Board of Regents, might be merged and brought under a single governing board.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the committee shall consist of three (3) members of the House of Representatives and three (3) members of the Senate, to be appointed by the respective speakers, one each appointed from the respective Education, Government Operations, and Finance, Ways and Means committees of each chamber.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That all appropriate state agencies shall provide assistance to the special joint committee upon request of the chair.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That all legislative members of the special joint committee who are duly elected members of the General Assembly shall remain members of such committee until the committee reports its findings and recommendations to the General Assembly.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the special joint committee shall be convened by the member with the most years of continuous service in the General Assembly; and at its first meeting shall elect a chair, vice-chair, and such other officers the committee deems necessary.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the special committee shall timely report its findings and recommendations, including any proposed legislation or interim reports, to the One Hundred Third General Assembly, at which time the committee shall cease to exist.

